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Friday, 14 October 2005, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Eliasson ..... (Sweden)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 7 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

Letter from the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/60/344/Add.1)

The President: Members are aware that, pursuant to paragraph 7 of section I of General Assembly resolution 40/243, no subsidiary organ of the General Assembly should be permitted to meet at United Nations Headquarters during the main part of the Assembly's regular session unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly.

Authorization is thus sought for the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women to hold the continuation of its session in New York during the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, on the clear understanding that the continuation of the session will have to fit in with the available facilities and services and will not affect adversely the activities of the General Assembly. It is also understood that everything possible will be done to ensure the most efficient use of conference services.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to authorize the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women to meet during the main part of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly?

It was so decided.

Agenda items 66 and 47 (*continued*)

New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

(a) New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

Report of the Secretary-General (A/60/178)

Note by the Secretary-General (A/60/85)

(b) Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General (A/60/182)

2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa

Note by the Secretary-General (A/60/208)

Mr. Jenie (Indonesia): The delegation of Indonesia would like to thank the Secretary-General for his third consolidated report indicating the progress being made to implement the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (A/60/178). In commenting on the report, Indonesia would like to

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associate itself with the statement by the representative of Malaysia on behalf of the member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), as well as with the statement by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The report gives us cause to be optimistic and encourages the international community to see Africa as a continent of opportunity. Contrary to the persistent negative media images circulated around the world daily, we get from the report a balanced picture of a continent reinventing itself and using the NEPAD framework for its development. Indonesia fully supports that process, which has led to noteworthy changes thus far.

That is not to suggest that the road ahead is an easy one. There are constraints. Without significant international support, African States will find it extremely difficult to implement NEPAD, which will endow them with the capacity to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well. So far, they have been able to lay a solid foundation through critical political and social reforms to facilitate the implementation process and eventually allow African States to become fully integrated into the global economy.

Like the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1), which specifies the role of the international community in the NEPAD implementation process, the Secretary-General's report is equally precise about the various forms of international support that should be provided. Indonesia agrees with the view that donors must live up to their commitments to promote free and fair trade, with more reliable access to developed markets, as well as for affordable antiretroviral drugs to be made easily available so that African countries can contain the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which has severely undermined the development process on the continent.

Donors must also increase official development assistance (ODA) and provide Africa with greater debt relief. We therefore support the position taken by the African Group, as put forward by Namibia, welcoming the decision of the G-8 to completely cancel the debt of heavily indebted poor countries, a measure that has found favour with the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Bank. But such relief should be extended to include countries other than heavily indebted poor ones, as well as non-African middle-income countries.

In the face of such pressing needs, there can hardly be enough support to enable Africa to eliminate unwanted constraints on its development. In that connection, and on the basis of its long history of cooperation with African countries, dating back to the Bandung Conference of 1955, Indonesia has been actively involved in a number of initiatives that will help to accelerate the implementation of NEPAD and the achievement of the MDGs.

Perhaps the most important of those initiatives is the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership, which was launched during the Asian-African Summit held in Jakarta in April 2005. That Summit commemorated the golden jubilee of the 1955 Asian-African Conference, which marked a turning point in the political history of both continents. Speaking from a platform for justice, the 1955 Conference strengthened resolve for the battle against colonialism.

The old enemy to Asian-African development then was colonialism; the current enemy is poverty. The Strategic Partnership is designed to promote not only continued political solidarity but also to strengthen socio-cultural relations and enhance economic cooperation. Of particular concern, therefore, is the need for poverty reduction. Building on existing initiatives, the Partnership will allow Asia and Africa to pool their resources and expertise for people-centred development.

With human development in mind, an Asian-African development university network is currently being developed. With the cooperation of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations University and UNESCO, a pre-feasibility study has already been completed to pinpoint the resources available to the network to satisfy the specific needs that will be addressed initially. Indonesia is a member of the core group working on the network, along with Algeria, Japan and South Africa. The network, which embodies the inclusive spirit of South-South cooperation, has prioritized agriculture and food security, the promotion of small-and medium-sized enterprises, health and infrastructure — primarily power, water, telecommunications and transport — for immediate action.

The Strategic Partnership will also focus on trade and investment-facilitation programmes, which will allow for a consistent and profitable flow of goods and

services between the two regions. As a means of constantly expanding that interaction, there will be regular exchanges of information to encourage the promotion of trade and business opportunities between the two regions.

The private sectors in both regions are expected to play a key role in building Asian-African economic dynamism. To facilitate that cooperation, the Summit of heads of State and Government also featured the Asia-Africa Business Summit, which focused on exploring business opportunities and promoting trade and investment and ways to generate the required resources for the initiative. That connection will create the possibility for joint ventures, mergers and capital market cooperation. Steps were also taken to address energy issues, with the cooperation of the private sector. The Asian-African Symposium on Renewable Energy urged the formulation of an action plan for the two regions covering the period 2005-2015.

Mr. Zarif (Islamic Republic of Iran), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The Partnership will also foster greater people-to-people contacts. Prior to the 2005 Asian-African Summit, Indonesia hosted the Asian-African Workshop on the Role of Women and Youth in April 2005 in Jakarta. The workshop endorsed the need to promote and improve the status, role and condition of women and youth within the context of NAASP, as an integral part of the well-being and prosperity of the two continents.

Through technical cooperation among developing countries, Asian countries — Indonesia included — have been able to share information about best practices for development with African countries and have contributed to the pool of skills and expertise that can be applied to problem-solving activities affecting Africa's development. Between 1998 and 2005, Indonesia trained Africans from a number of countries in such diverse fields as family planning and health, rural development, agriculture, forestry and microfinance. Within the framework of the Non-Aligned Movement Centre for South-South Technical Cooperation in Indonesia, my country plans to provide further training on small- and medium-sized enterprises, microfinance and the application of information and communication technology.

The various initiatives I have mentioned are a reflection of continued solidarity with and support for our African brothers, who are now implementing NEPAD and pursuing the MDGs with the expectation of success in the future. As mentioned in the NEPAD Charter, Africans must be the architects of their own sustained advancement. But for the process of empowerment and self-reliance to be successful, external support would be helpful. Indonesia will continue to play its part.

Mr. Okio (Congo) (*spoke in French*): Our head of delegation has asked me to read the following statement. I would like to commend the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for the excellent report that he has presented, for the third consecutive year, on progress in implementation of and international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (A/60/178). Once again, this comprehensive report has drawn our attention not only to the challenges and constraints that we need to tackle and overcome, but also to progress accomplished in the implementation of NEPAD.

Our delegation associates itself with the statements made by Martin Andjaba, Permanent Representative of Namibia, on behalf of the African Group, and Stafford Neil, Permanent Representative of Jamaica, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. As others delegations have done, I would just like to add a few remarks.

Four years ago, African leaders adopted NEPAD with the objective of realizing broad and equitable growth that would help Africa to reduce poverty and better integrate itself into the international economy. Assessing the situation right now, it is very tempting to say that very little progress has been made over the past year — especially given that any progress made is dwarfed by the extent of such challenges as the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, mercenaries, the illegal exploitation of natural resources, youth unemployment and HIV/AIDS. First, however, we should be pleased with the efforts made by African countries to promote peace and security, as well as to develop NEPAD priority programmes and projects in areas such as transport, energy, water, health, education and information technology, environment, agriculture, science and technology, and industrialization, among others. We are sure that those efforts will yield results if they are given the necessary support.

This is also an opportunity to note with satisfaction the mobilization of international public

opinion in favour of Africa over the past year and the support that donor countries, partners in development, have pledged to the continent. We are very impressed with the declarations made here by Canada and the European Union to increase official development assistance (ODA) and everything else that will be done in that connection. The Group of Eight decision at Gleneagles to cancel the debt of 18 low-income countries, 14 of which are African, and the recent commitments undertaken by a number of developed countries at the recent world summit to increase their ODA are also encouraging signs for Africa and for the implementation of NEPAD. We hope that some of those measures, such as debt cancellation, will be broadened to include other groups of countries that have been excluded up till now, although they are eligible under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative.

In order to effect urgent implementation of NEPAD and give it substantial reinforcement, I would also like to affirm our support for the key points outlined by the Secretary-General in his report. At the regional level, among others, there is a need to build the capacities of national and regional institutions tasked with implementing NEPAD by providing them with the appropriate technical skills and adequate financial resources. We must assure greater consistency and better coordination between national development plans and NEPAD priorities through, among others, the NEPAD Peer Review Mechanism, which was set up with support from the United Nations Development Programme, and to which the Congo already belongs. We should also encourage a greater participation by the private sector in the implementation of NEPAD projects and programmes. At the international level, we must urge Africa's development partners to be diligent in disbursing funds for the implementation of NEPAD priority projects. We must promote and accelerate South-South cooperation, whose importance has already been emphasized at the Asian-African Summit held in Jakarta in April 2005 and at the second South Summit held in Doha in June 2005. At the next World Trade Organization meeting, to be held in Hong Kong in December 2005, trade decisions need to be made that are of particular interest to Africa — namely, the gradual elimination of rich countries' subsidies to their agricultural producers and the granting of access for African products to international markets. And, finally, the quality and coordination of United Nations system support for NEPAD must be improved through regular in-depth consultations with the African Union.

In concluding my review, I would like to reaffirm our support for the third report of the Secretary-General. The key points of that report constitute a genuine programme for the rapid implementation of and more efficient support for NEPAD.

Mr. Kapoma (Zambia): My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his informative reports on the agenda items we are discussing today. We find those reports to be very useful in our discussions.

My delegation would like to associate itself with the statements made by the representatives of Namibia on behalf of the African Group, Lesotho on behalf of the countries members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

At their Lusaka summit in 2001, the heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU) adopted the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) programme, the main objective of which is to enhance the capacity of African countries to reduce the high incidence of poverty on the continent and to strengthen efforts to achieve economic development. While we acknowledge the fact that the support provided so far by the international community has assisted us in the process of attaining NEPAD's objectives, it is also true that that support has proved to be insufficient and needs to be increased. Although NEPAD is an initiative by and for African countries themselves, there is an urgent need for more support from the international community.

The African Union has adopted the African Peer Review Mechanism, whose mandate is to ensure that the policies and practices of participating countries conform to the agreed political, economic and corporate values, codes and standards contained in the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance of the African Union. To that end, member States of the African Union have committed themselves to adopting relevant laws, policies and standards and to building the necessary human and institutional capacities.

Within the framework of NEPAD, Zambia is focusing on the provision of infrastructure at the national level by upgrading existing infrastructures and

constructing new ones in the sectors of agriculture, tourism, mining, education, health and human resources.

With regard to malaria, Zambia fully supports the conclusions and recommendations of the World Health Organization contained in document A/60/208, which, among other things, states that malaria-endemic countries should assess and respond to the need for integrated human resources at all levels. That would be in accordance with the targets of the 2000 Abuja Declaration to Roll Back Malaria in Africa and with the internationally agreed Development Goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

My Government, together with cooperating partners, have launched the national malaria control strategy, whose goal is to accelerate and document the impact of progress towards meeting Zambia's malaria control target. In that regard, my Government has adopted a new malaria treatment policy to overcome the problem of drug resistance. Furthermore, we have remained committed to health reform despite the many challenges the health sector is facing, and we continue to provide subsidized insecticide-treated nets and drugs to needy communities.

My delegation welcomes the September 2005 outcome document (resolution 60/1) of the United Nations world summit, which, among other things, recognizes that HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases pose severe risks for the entire world. Those diseases remain serious challenges to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. My Government, through an act of Parliament, has established the National HIV/AIDS/STI/TB Council to coordinate all interventional efforts.

In conclusion, my delegation appeals to the international community as a whole, and in particular to the United Nations system, to continue to provide support to Zambia in the fight against malaria and other infectious diseases.

Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan): My delegation appreciates the opportunity to participate in this joint debate and to share its views on issues related to the promotion of development and durable peace in Africa.

The third consolidated report of the Secretary-General (A/60/178) provides useful analysis of progress and constraints encountered within the reporting period. In that regard, we would like to commend the work of the Secretary-General's Advisory Panel on International Support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the conclusion of which is crystal-clear: "NEPAD cannot succeed without a significant increase in support from the international community" (*Ibid., para. 3*).

We are pleased to find that an unprecedented increase in international attention in support of Africa has been observed. Therefore, we would like to pay tribute to Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, former Special Adviser on Africa, for his dedication to promoting the global partnership for Africa's development. Likewise, we praise the efforts of African countries themselves and the progress made in the areas of good governance, democracy and human rights. The positive shift in nearly all priority areas agreed within the NEPAD framework is also an encouraging sign. However, another — and perhaps the most important — attainment is the increase in the regional integration component, the building of regional economic communities and ultimately the consolidation of a holistic approach to development on the basis of national ownership. We believe that those positive signs will serve as an impetus to further strengthen international support aimed at overcoming development challenges.

The Secretary-General's report states clearly that the absence of infrastructure remains a serious challenge and has a broad range of implications. Therefore, we believe that increased investments in the area of capacity-building and infrastructure development will yield long-term benefits.

Furthermore, regional and subregional cooperative arrangements, backed by international support, could enhance the development of energy corridors, an efficient transit-transport system and increased regional trade turnover. In the long run, such arrangements could have the potential to build a self-sufficient regional economic network. In the meantime, we are convinced that support for the social sector — particularly for the areas of health and education — should be an essential component of the overall international framework for providing assistance to NEPAD's economic agenda.

We believe that South-South cooperation — in particular the training of health professionals and knowledge exchange programmes — has the potential

to address existing challenges in the area of health delivery and management.

With regard to the international response, we welcome and support the according of priority to Africa's needs on the international development agenda and the reaffirmation of our commitments in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1). Furthermore, we hail recent initiatives in the areas of aid and debt relief. We also consider the forthcoming ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organization to be a crucial opportunity to make the trade regime more favourable and development-oriented, especially in the interest of the least developed countries.

We studied with great interest the Secretary-General's report in document A/60/182. It presents a useful overview of conflict trends in Africa as well as an analysis of the effectiveness of international cooperation in the areas of conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping operations, reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Although there are fewer countries in a state of armed conflict and civil strife on the continent, we should obviously not be complacent because of what has been achieved so far. Economic and social threats, on the one hand, and internal conflicts, on the other, continue to jeopardize dialogues aimed at consolidating the peace. We are convinced that the international community should address those threats in a timely, coherent and comprehensive manner, with the United Nations playing a leading role.

Here, we should mention the strengthening of African Union's peacebuilding and peacekeeping capacities. We support the Secretary-General's recommendation that "it is vital for the international community to provide the necessary financial support to develop African Union peacekeeping capacity and to establish the African Standby Force" (*A/60/182, para. 81*).

With regard to peacebuilding and reconstruction, we believe that disarmament, the reintegration of refugees and post-conflict long-term development should be one of the most important and essential components of post-conflict activities. Therefore, we have supported the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission and look forward to its early implementation.

Because Azerbaijan is a conflict-affected country and one whose economy is in transition, it has limited financial resources to channel to the implementation of NEPAD. However, we stand ready to provide our institutional and human capacities for the benefit of this Partnership. As an oil-producing and exporting country, Azerbaijan holds a strong comparative advantage in educating petroleum engineers, workers and researchers. For decades, many young and ambitious men and women from fraternal African countries have received their higher education in our Oil Academy, as well as in other educational institutions. We are proud to say that today many of them occupy important positions in their respective Governments and in the private sector across Africa and contribute to their national development. Azerbaijan is ready to provide assistance in educating and training young African professionals. We believe that the continuation of this partnership would be a good contribution to building African human capacity and ensure sustainable and rational management of natural resources throughout the entire African continent.

Mr. Chaudhry (Pakistan): For the third year running, this Assembly is jointly considering the progress in the implementation of and international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the recommendations of the Secretary-General. We welcome this practice. It is in line with the long-held view, also recognized recently by the 2005 September summit, that development and peace and security are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Durable peace can be achieved only through a comprehensive strategy.

We are pleased to note that the two complementary reports of the Secretary-General under this agenda item present a comprehensive picture of the progress made in promoting sustainable development and peace and security in Africa over the past year.

Economic and social threats, including poverty, infectious disease and environmental degradation, as well as internal conflicts, continue to afflict the continent. The Secretary-General has noted that while the international community's attention has been forcefully directed to the importance of such threats, there is concern that the financial and human resources required to solve the multidimensional interlinked problems will fall well short of what is needed.

It is encouraging that last month's United Nations summit resolved to strengthen cooperation with NEPAD by mobilizing internal and external financial resources to support Africa. The 2005 summit also reaffirmed that development is a central goal in itself. Pakistan strongly believes that development is the best means of preventing conflict in the first place, not just to prevent a relapse into conflict.

We commend the African leadership for their vision in launching NEPAD, an Africa-led, Africa-owned and Africa-driven initiative providing an integrated and comprehensive framework for Africa's sustainable growth and development.

The report of the Secretary-General on progress in implementation and international support for NEPAD (A/60/178) rightly calls attention to the challenges and constraints in its implementation. We support the Secretary-General's recommendations calling for, first, building the capacity of national and regional institutions entrusted with the tasks of implementing NEPAD; secondly, ensuring greater coherence and coordination between national development plans and NEPAD priorities; thirdly, promoting greater involvement of the private sector in the implementation of NEPAD programmes and projects; fourthly, the international community's honouring of commitments made and delivering the pledged support; and fifthly, African countries showing their commitment to social and economic reforms through sound economic management and the implementation of NEPAD priorities.

We welcome the World Bank's initiative to develop the Africa Action Plan.

The Secretary-General's progress report relating to the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/60/182) highlights in particular the need for special attention to post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding, which is of significant relevance to Africa. Resolution 59/255, adopted by the General Assembly last year, emphasized the need for continued collaboration between the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council in generating a coherent approach.

In the context of peace and security, a major achievement of the September summit was the decision to establish the Peacebuilding Commission, which is of high relevance to Africa. Africa also stands to gain immensely from the summit's decisions on the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention, peacekeeping, the rule of law, internally displaced persons, refugee protection and assistance, protection from genocide, system-wide coherence — in particular for humanitarian assistance — and cooperation with regional organizations.

The challenge ahead is to implement all these decisions and commitments. This requires the continued and sustained support of the international community. We welcome in that context the commitment for long-term support to Africa from the European Union and the Group of Eight.

For its part, Pakistan has consistently backed the political and economic aspirations of Africa and strongly supports effective and speedy implementation of NEPAD's objectives.

In the field of peace and security, Pakistan is proud of its contribution to the United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa. Our military and civilian personnel have been part of United Nations operations in Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Namibia, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Western Sahara.

In the context of South-South cooperation, Pakistan has been providing assistance to African countries in various fields. Under the Government's special technical assistance programme for Africa, hundreds of young African professionals have received training in Pakistan in various fields, including banking, public administration, diplomacy and civil aviation. Pakistan also offers military training to officers from a number of African countries. We are in the process of further expanding the scope and scale of our assistance and cooperation programmes for Africa.

I wish to conclude by saying that the challenges faced by Africa are colossal, but the opportunities, means and resources to address those challenges are also immense. NEPAD presents a realistic framework for action. The African Union is emerging as a dynamic factor promoting African ownership in tackling Africa's problems. The subregional organizations in the African continent are also playing an important role. We are hopeful that these regional and subregional mechanisms will be able to devote more attention and resources to social and economic development in the future as conflicts and crises that

sap most of their energy at present are brought under control.

Important and far reaching international commitments are there to assist Africa. With the commensurate political will on the part of the international community, in particular the developed world, to faithfully implement these commitments, Africa can hope to realize its full political and economic potential, thus contributing to international peace and security.

Mr. Irhiam (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): Sir, I am happy to see you presiding over our discussion of items of particular importance for the African continent, to which my country belongs. I wish to pay tribute to the preliminary statement of the President of the General Assembly; it is important, and I am sure it will play an important role in our discussions on this subject. I would also like to endorse the statements made by the representatives of Namibia and Jamaica, on behalf of the African Group and the Group of 77 and China, respectively.

African heads of State have long understood that achieving peace and stability on the African continent is a prerequisite for development. That has been repeatedly reaffirmed by the Secretary-General in his reports to the General Assembly. The African Union (AU) has therefore made every effort necessary to achieve international peace and security on our beloved continent, especially by establishing the Peace and Security Council, which has been charged with the responsibilities of defining threats to peace and of maintaining peace. The AU has also strengthened its capacities to intervene and mediate by establishing the African Peace Facility. It is now attempting to establish an African Standby Force and a Continental Early Warning System.

While we pay tribute to the effective contribution of the United Nations in resolving conflicts and establishing peace on the African continent, we also hope that the international community will provide the financial support necessary to strengthen the capacities of the AU in the area of maintaining peace, in order that it can succeed in ending all conflicts on the continent, especially since the number of such conflicts has been greatly reduced in recent years.

African leaders have reaffirmed their commitment and determination to ensure the success of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) by adopting effective measures to implement it, given that it is an initiative aimed at achieving the aspirations of African countries in comprehensive development and ensuring their integration into the global economy. Africa is well aware that it has the primary responsibility for the implementation of NEPAD. However, the chronic weakness of African economies, resulting from the plundering of resources and the deprivation of Africans during the long period of colonization, leaves African countries no choice but to resort to the financial support of the United Nations system, international financial institutions and developed countries in order to reach NEPAD's goals.

In his report in document A/60/178, the Secretary-General points out that NEPAD can succeed only with considerable increased support from the international community. The report also states that it is urgent that the commitments made by Africa's development partners be translated into concrete results.

Without going into details and figures, I would like to underscore Libya's contribution to various fields of development in African countries. We have provided assistance to combat epidemic diseases and overcome the effects of natural disasters — including floods, droughts and infestation by locusts and other pests. We should also like point to our involvement in South-South cooperation with neighbourly Nigeria and friendly Cuba in the medical field in order to set up clinics and medical centres to provide treatment and medicines in many African countries.

Taking into consideration the rise in the price of oil and its disastrous effects on African countries, particularly those experiencing economic crises, Libya has called for the convening of a meeting of African oil-producing countries to find a solution to this problem.

Given the bleak statistics on Africa and the prevalence of such diseases as AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis — with their human consequences and the material and financial effects on budgets and development plans on the continent — we believe that the future consequences of the situation will have an impact upon peace and security not only in Africa, but also in the world at large. In that regard, allow me to convey to the General Assembly what a journalist reported on his visit to an African village. He found only old men and women, as well as children, but no

one representing the age groups in between. The journalist thought that the young had gone to neighbouring villages and cities to "find work in various areas, but he was surprised to learn that the young people had simply died of AIDS. The only people left in the village were children and old people, some of whom also carried the disease. That story reminds us of Africa's difficult situation.

We have recognized that peace, security, development and human rights are inextricably linked. They constitute the pillars of the international order and the foundations of peace and prosperity. It is for that reason that it is difficult for the international community to enjoy those concepts in the absence of development in Africa. There cannot be overall development and stability in the world without development in Africa.

We would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the World Health Organization and Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS for their efforts to combat AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. We also wish to emphasize the important role played by doctors and other health workers in African countries.

We would like to emphasize that developed countries must keep their promises. The time has come for words to be translated into concrete actions.

Mr. Zhdanovich (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): In debating the problems in Africa, we are pleased to note the positive nature of recent trends on the continent. These include a significant reduction in the number of major conflicts, the establishment of the African Peer Review Mechanism to support national efforts to strengthen the system of political, economic and corporate governance, and an increase in the rate of economic growth on the continent, although it is not yet sufficient to ensure the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

We view the strengthening of stability on the African continent as one of the major challenges facing the international community. Achieving that must become a critical component of developing a global system under the auspices of the United Nations to confront the threats and challenges of today's world.

Along with the rest of the international community, Belarus welcomes the establishment of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). NEPAD reflects the desire of the peoples of Africa to take the issues of development on the continent into their own hands and to put an end to hunger, poverty, illness and inequality. We are convinced that the international community must more actively support the process of implementing that programme, in particular by allocating to it the appropriate financial resources.

In the run up to the 2005 World Summit, much was said — in particular by our partners from the industrialized countries — about the importance of good governance at all levels for sustainable economic growth and social progress throughout the world.

NEPAD is a vivid example of good governance on the regional level. We believe that the recently held United Nations summit must become a starting point for an acceleration of the process of implementing that programme. In an era of globalization, not only would that make Africa a winner, but the entire world as well.

Mrs. Núñez de Odremán (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela supports the statement made by the Jamaican Ambassador on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. However, we would like to comment, in particular concerning our country, with reference to the item discussed today.

During the eighteenth century, Africans from Senegal, Sierra Leone, Benin and the Gulf of Guinea were brought to colonial Venezuela, where they were subjected to slavery in the same manner as they were in all regions of the Caribbean. They were used as manpower on coffee, cocoa and sugarcane plantations and as domestic workers by the Creole landowners and colonial authorities, who ruled the land.

While they were not a majority of the Venezuelan population, which consisted of Spanish descendants and various indigenous groups among others, they were a large part of the population and formed a core population in areas along the approximately 2,000 kilometres of the Venezuelan Caribbean coastline. That is where the roots of African culture were sown; today they form a proud part of the vibrancy of our cultural heritage and our national identity.

Three centuries of racial intermingling have led to an African imprint on all the regions of our country, throughout which our people's faces reveal, in an indivisible mixture, their African and indigenous

ancestry along with their Spanish genetic and cultural inheritance.

The process of gaining independence from Spanish imperialism was transformed from a class struggle to a national one by the action taken in 1816 by the elite civilian and military liberators, who were nurtured by the first anti-colonial rebellion in the Caribbean — the Haitian Revolution of 1804.

Subsequently our liberator, Simón Bolívar, out of gratitude for the solidarity of the people and Government of Haiti, issued a decree in 1816 to embark from Haiti, land on the east coast of Venezuela and declare the liberation of the slaves in Venezuela — an act that had a decisive impact on the strengthening of the process of emancipation of our countries. That liberation was subsequently confirmed and further developed in 1854 during the Government of the Bolivarian General José Gregorio Monagas.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela continued to pursue a foreign policy begun during the Second World War, namely to offer its support for achieving the independence of African peoples, including in some areas where great conflicts took place during the struggles for national liberation, as was the case in Namibia. We also maintained a position — from the rostrum of this Assembly — supporting the elimination of apartheid in South Africa.

African colonial inheritance persists today as a reality for the peoples of the continent, subject directly or indirectly to intervention by the former colonial Powers, which have resisted abandoning their past practices. We must therefore resolutely confront division, exploitation, exclusion, poverty and hunger, as a result of that scourge.

Today we appreciate the demographic strength, the hydrologic potential, the arable lands, the mineral wealth and the profound awareness of the African leaders and the resurgence of their will to achieve integration and their devotion to multilateralism and presence in the international community as a regional progressive identity. We welcome that identity as indispensable for achieving balance among nations and the eradication of hunger, universal poverty and the exclusion of peoples.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has assumed a growing role in its relations with Africa and we share the suffering, achievements and dreams of Africans as brothers. We have built bridges of friendship, solidarity and identity towards Africa through our foreign policy to defend sovereignty, multipolarity and multilateralism as well as their institutional expression, as we also share our untiring struggle against poverty at the global level.

At the beginning of 2005 our relations with the African continent were, we believe, meagre and inadequate. They scarcely existed with Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Egypt, Nigeria, South Africa, Senegal, Kenya, Namibia, Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Equatorial Guinea, Lesotho, Rwanda, the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic, Tanzania, Tunisia, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, where there were few embassies and in most cases representation was present only as needed. There were no relations with the other 20 African countries, most of them in sub-Saharan Africa.

In December 2004, we established a new section in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs — the Vice Ministry for Africa. During its short existence it has established diplomatic relations with the Republic of the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mauritius, Chad and Somalia. We have adhered to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. Humanitarian aid in the amount of $3 million has been provided to Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Niger in the context of South-South cooperation.

A subcommittee for Asia the Middle East and Africa was created within the National Assembly. That subcommittee has made three visits, the first in March 2005 to Morocco and Mali, the second to Sudan and Egypt in June and the third to Senegal, Gambia, Benin and Nigeria in October. It was announced that by next year, the Republic will have relations with all of the African States. The subcommittee has submitted a request to join the African Union as an observer State. Lastly, from 13 to 20 November 2005, there will be a Venezuelan cultural festival with the African people. Eighteen African nations have already confirmed their intention to attend.

Finally, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela welcomes the political measures and initiatives adopted by African countries and organizations with a view to implementing the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Mr. Zenna (Ethiopia): Allow me to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, for establishing the Advisory Panel on International Support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). I would also like to thank the Secretary-General's Advisory Panel on NEPAD for its report, entitled "From rhetoric to action: mobilizing international support to unleash Africa's potential" (A/60/85).

My delegation associates itself with the statements made by the Permanent Representatives of Jamaica, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and Namibia, on behalf of the African Group.

The report of the Secretary-General on progress in implementation and international support for NEPAD (A/60/178) once again brings to the attention of the international community the need to remain engaged with Africa as regards the basic tenets of NEPAD. In our view, the two central messages of the report are a reflection of the mutual responsibility and accountability underpinning NEPAD. That is what African leaders had in mind when they initiated NEPAD. Indeed, the Partnership cannot succeed without a significant increase in support from the international community, nor can it succeed without Africa's commitment to improved economic and political governance.

The primary focus of the African Union is to put the continent's socio-economic development agenda at the forefront and to work closely with its partners to bring about real changes in development on the continent. In that regard, NEPAD is the most effective instrument to promote the socio-economic agenda for the betterment of the people of Africa and to put Africa in the international development spotlight.

Let me take this opportunity to briefly highlight the major steps taken under NEPAD at the regional level in accordance with its programme of action.

Under the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, bankable projects have been prepared in more than 30 African countries and tremendous efforts have been made to develop a tracking mechanism to monitor the commitments made by African Governments to allocate 10 per cent of their national budgets to agriculture.

With regard to NEPAD's African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), the panel of eminent persons making up this programme has already been identified. As of August 2005, 25 countries, including my own, have voluntarily signed up for the APRM, and the process has begun with a number of reviews.

In the area of infrastructure and capacity-building, high-priority projects have been approved by the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee to be implemented by regional economic communities.

Ethiopia has been engaged in implementing various policies and programmes that are in line with NEPAD. Efforts are being made in the areas of political and economic governance. On 15 May 2005, Ethiopia carried out its third-ever multiparty elections. Efforts are also under way to improve the public sector, with a view to making it much more transparent, accountable and efficient. Ethiopia has designed, and begun to implement, a capacity-building strategy in the public sector. Anti-corruption measures have also been put in place.

With regard to expenditure targets — in conformity with Ethiopia's long-term development strategy, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), our sustainable development and poverty reduction programme and NEPAD — Government spending has been progressively oriented towards poverty reduction expenditure in the areas of education, health and agriculture.

The President returned to the Chair.

With regard to the gender perspective and the empowerment of women, several measures have been undertaken in recent years to enhance the empowerment of women. In that connection, the Women's Affairs Office, which is under the Prime Minister's Office, has been preparing a national plan of action on gender equality, which is also in line with the Beijing Declaration of the Fourth World Conference on Women. The Women's Affairs Office has recently been upgraded to the ministerial level.

We share the views expressed by the Advisory Panel with respect to the growing consensus of what needs to be done in Africa and the priority areas identified for implementation. Indeed, without transforming the rural and agricultural sectors of Africa, without investing in the development of its human resources, without creating an enabling climate for the private sector through investing in physical

infrastructure, without improvements in governance in Africa and without squarely addressing conflicts and bringing peace, we cannot think of attaining sustainable growth and development in Africa. An efficient, supportive and capable public sector is of course vital to achieving those goals.

Regarding conflict resolution and the promotion of peace at the continental level, we are encouraged by the dynamism that the new African Union has injected into the joint African effort towards peace and stability.

As to the spirit envisioned by NEPAD, Africa's partners have also been increasing their commitment to support Africa's efforts. The recent decisions by the Group of Eight industrialized countries and the European Union in favour of the development of Africa, and the subsequent endorsement by the international community at the recent summit last September confirm the growing recognition of the need for action in support of Africa. Pledges by partners range from doubling official development assistance to Africa from its current level to $50 billion dollars by 2010, and debt relief to address the pressing challenges in the areas of agriculture, health, education and infrastructure. Ethiopia welcomes those efforts. We are confident that, in keeping with the title of the Advisory Panel's report, we will be able to move from rhetoric to action.

Malaria is one of Ethiopia's foremost health problems, ranking at the top of the list of communicable diseases. Malaria is endemic in three quarters of the country's land mass, and about two thirds of the population is at risk of infection. As a result, considerable attention has been given to malaria control from the very inception of the country's health sector development programme, in order to reduce the overall burden of the disease's morbidity and mortality.

The previous system of a vertical approach to malaria prevention and control has been phased out, and the service responsible for it has been integrated into the basic health service delivery system in order to ensure sustainability and the effective prevention and control of malaria in general, and epidemics in particular. The national strategic plan for the control of malaria in Ethiopia was developed on the basis on the framework of the World Health Organization's Roll Back Malaria Global Strategic Plan. That plan aims to reduce the burden of malaria by 25 per cent by the end of this year, and achieve the Abuja Roll Back Malaria target of 50 per cent by the year 2010. The utilization of insecticide-treated nets (ITN) is to be enhanced to 60 per cent by the year 2007. Early diagnosis and prompt treatment, the spraying of houses with insecticides, the distribution of ITNs and prompt community participation in the prevention and control of malaria have been priority interventions to date.

With regard to the mobilization of resources to combat malaria, multilateral donors have mobilized to establish a malaria control support team. This team helps to identify, and fill gaps in the malaria prevention and control programme. Significant achievement has also been made in soliciting funds from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria during the implementation period. Furthermore, cost estimates for the full set of interventions required to achieve the MDGs with respect to reversing the course of malaria in Ethiopia has been completed.

Those and other achievements have not been without challenges. Overcoming a shortage of, and high turnover in, personnel, inadequate community participation and the slow pace of utilizing the funds already solicited has proved to be an uphill struggle. Other challenges in preventing and controlling malaria include anomalous climatic changes that lead to epidemic conditions, the increase of water development schemes, increasing population movements, the emergence and spread of drug-resistant strains, the unaffordability and shortage of the new artemesinin-based combination therapies, and inadequate supplies of long-lasting insecticide-treated nets.

In conclusion, I wish to emphasize that malaria will remain one of the priority areas of intervention for the health sector in Ethiopia. I therefore call upon the international community, United Nations agencies and bilateral donors to strengthen their support with a view to meeting the targets set out in the Abuja Declaration.

Mr. Attieh (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Permit me at the outset to thank the Secretary-General for the reports before us today.

My delegation associates itself with the statement by the Permanent Representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The Syrian Arab Republic believes that the efforts to achieve development in the South will be complete only if priority is accorded to African

concerns. My delegation has always supported the special needs of Africa, including its full support for the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which was adopted by African leaders four years ago.

Syria welcomes the recent progress in the implementation of NEPAD and hopes that the mechanisms established within its framework will lead to concrete successes in the coming years. We agree with the report of the Secretary-General's Advisory Panel on International Support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (A/60/85), which states that such success will require international support. That will involve increasing official development assistance, providing debt relief and making maximum use of the trade sector. The report also highlights the importance of exploiting African capacities in various sectors. That will depend to a great extent on the international community's cooperation with African countries in the areas of technology transfer and capacity-building.

Supporting NEPAD is the best way to improve the efficiency of assistance to Africa, to support African priorities and to improve the capacity of Governments to establish links between sustainable development and anti-poverty strategies that meet the needs of African States.

Despite the importance of the decision of the Group of Eight to cancel the debts of many of the poorest countries, we wish to reaffirm that there should also be a serious solution for medium-income developing countries and debt cancellation for the least developed countries, many of which are on the African continent.

Since development and peace are closely interrelated, Syria supports all efforts to end the conflicts in Africa. Through its Security Council membership in 2002 and 2003, Syria mobilized the international community's efforts to promote peace in Africa and sincerely addressed the issues then before the Council, taking into account the rights and interests of African people. We also participated actively in a number of Security Council missions to areas where conflict might resume, which made recommendations aimed at achieving stability in Africa.

In that respect, we wish to reaffirm the importance of continuing the international efforts to end conflict and promote lasting peace and stability in Africa and of supporting the positive developments referred to in the report of the Secretary-General. We also wish to commend the African Union for its efforts and its leading peacekeeping activities on the continent. We support the position of the Group of African States concerning national ownership of peacebuilding activities in Africa.

If we are to maintain the momentum of the past few years of according priority to the special needs of Africa, we must all make greater efforts within the main and subsidiary bodies of the United Nations. We must benefit from ideas and initiatives promoting sustainable development and health, particularly those concerning the provision of free antimalaria mosquito nets and efforts to fight HIV/AIDS and the other pandemics that threaten the lives of millions of people in Africa and the world, and developing countries in particular.

Mr. Christmas (Saint Kitts and Nevis): It is not only a new partnership, but a new Africa, that we are seeing, especially when we look at the books now emanating from Africa. I would like to highlight in particular the book by the South African President, Thabo Mbeki, *Africa: Define Yourself*, which tells of the new Africa we are seeing today.

Before I discuss the external partnership linking Africa with other countries, I would like to focus on an internal partnership for Africa. On the basis of our experience in the Caribbean region, we have a common university for the Anglophone Caribbean. I believe that some time ago, an attempt was made in Africa to bring together the universities of Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana. That probably fell by the wayside. We are willing to share our experiences in this area with the emerging new Africa and with the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

In our region, we have a common examination system for all the schools in the Anglophone Caribbean under the aegis of the University of the West Indies, so that the examination we give in Trinidad is the same one that we give in Jamaica and in Saint Kitts. We have a common currency for eight of the eastern Caribbean countries, called the Windward and the Leeward Islands. We are now attempting a common passport for the Anglophone Caribbean and have a common cricket team.

We are willing to share all these assets — and I am not saying that Africa can follow them — as well as our experience along these lines, with the emerging

Africa. I think that once a country is well cemented within itself, and has the appropriate partnerships within the continent, then it can move with confidence into partnership with other countries.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/2 of 19 October 1994, I call on the Observer of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Mr. Gospodinov (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies): Allow me to start on a personal note. Every time I meet a colleague from Africa in the United Nations building, I see a silent question in his eyes that ask "Are you doing the best you can for our continent?" I must confess that for us at the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) it is not an easy question to answer. I am sure that many colleagues in this room share the same feeling that, despite some recent progress, we could — and should — do more for Africa.

This is more easily said than done. In a year such as this, when over the last 10 months alone hundreds of thousands of people have been killed and tens of millions affected by the tsunami tragedy, hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Stan, and now the horrific scenes in the aftermath of the earthquake in Pakistan and India, one may lose sight of Africa. It may no longer be a daily front-page story.

Yet for us Africa remains a priority. Thirty per cent of our Global Appeal for 2005 is for Africa. Of the 60 million Swiss francs sought, 88 per cent is directed to health care and disaster management and to building the capacity of our local member Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Africa. Last year, during the Sixth Pan-African Conference held in Algiers, the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement identified four major goals: scaling up the HIV/AIDS response; the African Red Cross/Red Crescent Health Initiative 2010, known as ARCHI 2010 addressing food security; and building local capacity. These are at the centre of a large part of our debate today, as was thoroughly analysed in the reports of the Secretary-General, which we appreciate. We are also encouraged by the latest initiatives of the Group of Eight, the European Union and, especially, the Government of the United Kingdom, for searching for and finding new ways to better assist the African continent.

We are pleased to see that the creation of a culture of prevention and the improvement of community health as preconditions for sustainable development are important, essential parts of United Nations future strategy. We fully support that approach. Yet, we believe that Africa must drive its own development and that the commitment of countries in need is essential to our common search for success in that continent. In this context, we believe that the communities themselves, the most vulnerable in Africa, must be included in the development platforms of their countries, especially in the fields of public health and disaster preparedness.

Looking back on our collective commitment undertaken at Ouagadougou in 1999, we are pleased to inform the General Assembly that, over the past five years, we have been able to significantly decrease measles-related child mortality in Africa as a result of the Measles Partnership; that the Abuja Roll Back Malaria target for long-lasting insecticide nets coverage for Togo was accomplished in one week, when 805,000 nets were distributed to people in need; and that the number of polio-endemic countries is steadily decreasing, with possible polio eradication, we hope, by 2008.

Learning from the polio and measles partnerships, Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies from Ghana, Zambia, Togo and Niger — with funding from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and from the Canadian Government — are preparing to distribute 2.26 million mosquito nets in Niger in December. This will secure the protection of every child under the age of five in Niger — a total of 3.5 million children. Maybe this is a modest figure, but it is yet another example of our excellent partnership with our friends from the United Nations family, especially the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

A joint polio and measles appeal brought capacity and results. During the last five years, more than 30 of our Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Africa provided social mobilization support to polio National Immunization Days, with approximately 1 million Swiss francs annually per each National Society. The same appeal enabled more than 35 of our African member societies to support measles campaigns in their countries and to participate in the Africa Measles Initiative partnership.

More effort, as well as human and financial resources, are being invested in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Anti-stigma campaigns, peer education, home-based care and partnerships with the people living with HIV/AIDS are only part of the job being done by our staff members and our volunteers.

However, we know that much more is needed from all of us. This battle is far from over. We are concerned that humanitarian emergencies linked to natural and man-made disasters, such as food insecurity, population movement and cholera, continue to destabilize West and Central Africa. Both political will and the resources to deal with these emergencies are not yet present.

No matter how many tons of medicine and mosquito nets we distribute, we know it will not be enough unless we invest in people and local capacity. This is one of the reasons why we are expanding our volunteer networks, as they are part of the local communities. Developing regional response teams is part of the same logic, and this will lead to integrating local staff and volunteers into international response teams. Both volunteers and the most vulnerable people are involved as partners in planning, implementing and evaluating prevention, emergency and health activities. The sick and starving sometimes know best what kind of help they need.

Our global long-term partnerships in water/sanitation have resulted in 2.5 million beneficiaries. By 2015, we plan to reach five million people. More than six million people have benefited from emergency assistance during the past 10 years. A big part of that job was done by our volunteers.

We also see this process as more than just feeding the hungry and curing the sick. Investing in the people of Africa is another step towards eradicating poverty and building peace and stability. As part of these efforts, the IFRC Secretary-General, together with senior officials from 12 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, are now working in the field with our Sudanese Red Crescent colleagues, trying to find solutions to some of the most urgent humanitarian challenges in the Sudan.

We know well that no matter how big our network may be, we cannot help Africa without working together with our partners, be they Government institutions or the United Nations. We therefore reached an agreement in March of this year with Medecins sans Frontieres Belgium and the World Food Programme to jointly assist people living with HIV/AIDS in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including people receiving antiretroviral treatment. Similar cooperation formulas are to be applied between the IFRC and eight major United Nations agencies working in Southern Africa.

To conclude, Mr. President, let me mention some specific challenges we face. Very often, it is increasingly difficult to recruit qualified technical experts to deploy during emergencies in the continent, especially French-speaking experts. With the dramatically increased number of natural disasters in South Asia, the Caribbean and Central America, as well as the United States Gulf Coast, many of our best experts are being drawn away from Africa. It is no secret that, despite broad agreement that Africa must remain a focus and a priority, both human and financial resources go elsewhere. There were no tsunamis or earthquakes in West and Central Africa, thank God, but the number of people suffering there is no less impressive or unpleasantly disturbing.

That brings me back to where I started: the silent question in the eyes of our African colleagues. Are we doing the best we can for the continent? Despite some improvements, the answer remains mixed.

There is an old African saying, that a boy becomes a man after he kills a lion. Translating that into today's African reality, it seems that we all have a lot of lions to deal with before maturity is reached and the future of Africa is secured.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on the items before the Assembly. We have heard a total of 43 speakers in that debate. It is of course impossible to summarize the rich and comprehensive discussion we have had. However, allow me to list some key points that I think have emerged from this important debate.

First, with regard to malaria, speakers strongly welcomed the real progress that has been made recently. But there was also equally strong recognition that stepped-up action is needed to prevent the unnecessary deaths of so many people, particularly children in Africa.

Secondly, there has been recognition that the scourge of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and other communicable disease threatens to reverse the gains being made in development. Stronger public health systems are needed for prevention, treatment, care and

research, as well as for the resources necessary to do all that.

Thirdly, it was widely recognized that the New Partnership for Africa's Development has changed the nature of discussions on development. There is now a spirit of genuine partnership and African ownership. For example, the African Peer Review Mechanism was frequently cited as an illustration of the way things are changing in that regard.

Fourthly, I want in particular to commend African progress in the areas of peace and security, which was noted by many speakers — for instance, the African Union's Peace and Security Council and progress towards an early-warning system and an African standby force. We welcome the African Union's goal of a conflict-free Africa by 2010. The Assembly will recall that the figures pertaining to conflict were rather high in 1998, but have now gone from, I think, 14 to 3. I think that is also an interesting aspect of how we can live up to Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. Let us remember that regional organizations and arrangements are part of the Charter. I believe that is an illustration of what this means in practice.

Fifthly, there was a broad call for the rapid establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, on which very important consultations and negotiations are taking place. But there has also been a strong message from this Hall about the importance of establishing the Commission quickly.

There has been a welcome increase in interest in Africa's priorities, especially the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme and the new international consortium on infrastructure.

The recent commitments on official development assistance (ODA) were widely welcomed, including the commitment to double ODA to Africa and the commitments by many donors to reach the target of 0.7 per cent in ODA. Speakers welcomed the progress made earlier this year at Paris on the effectiveness of aid and increased flows of donor funding as budget support. There were calls for further work to ensure that the donor system, including the United Nations system, is well coordinated.

In addition, speakers welcomed African commitments on governance, anti-corruption measures and the creation of a good climate for investment.

But there was strong emphasis on the need to keep up momentum and preserve the sense of urgency in our work, as well as on the need to monitor implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting and the particular commitments made to Africa. In that regard, I welcome the role of the new African Partnership Forum.

With regard to debt, speakers welcomed the progress made this year, in particular the G-8 debt initiative. But there were also calls for action on the issue of debt in all heavily indebted African countries.

On trade, from the very beginning to the end of our debate there was a strong push for a breakthrough at Hong Kong.

With regard to foreign direct investment, there was a concern that only 3 per cent of such flows are going to Africa. There were expressions of hope and determination, in some cases, to work to change that situation.

Lastly, we heard many good and practical examples of South-South cooperation as a very valuable complement to ongoing donor support. We therefore have national efforts, good regional efforts, good South-South cooperation and, it is to be hoped, good cooperation between donor and recipient countries.

All those matters were raised during our discussion. There is a need to continue to monitor progress on those issues. I am sure that the Second Committee and the Economic and Social Council will continue to carry out that monitoring.

I think that, coming after the summit meeting, this debate was timely in maintaining the momentum on the very important issues of development, not least the issues relating to the African continent and to fighting the scourge of malaria and other communicable diseases.

I thank representatives for making this debate a meaningful one. Let us carry forth its message during our continued work. I also thank members for their participation.

The Assembly has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of agenda items 66 and 47.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.